

Talking Points

Ice and Water Missions

1. The Corps of Engineers, under its mission responsibilities in the National Response Plan, orders ice and water for transport to disaster victims under the direction of FEMA. The Corps has awarded advance contracts with commodities suppliers which it activates through task orders when a disaster is anticipated or has occurred. Ice and water are delivered by the contractors to specified staging areas for further distribution at the appropriate time to points closer to disaster victims. Final distribution to individual victims is accomplished through local governments. The National Ice Mission is managed out of the Corps' Charleston, SC District, and the National Water Mission is managed by the Wilmington, NC District.
2. For Katrina, the Corps has followed its normal procedures, pre-positioning ice and water teams at staging areas prior to the storm. Following the storm, at FEMA's direction, we ordered very large quantities of these commodities (211 million pounds of ice, and 100 million liters of water) to meet the anticipated need.
3. As the commodities were being prepared and shipped, the situation on the ground was very dynamic, and projections of needs changed frequently as mass evacuations took place and many people moved out of the disaster area. These changes led to changes, transmitted to the Corps from FEMA, rerouting commodities to different staging areas and eventually to storage facilities as supply began to exceed demand. As this situation developed, some truckers were rerouted while attempting to deliver their commodities, and some were put in holding patterns as storage facilities were readied to accept their deliveries. A number of truckloads of commodities are currently staged in the Carolinas, Virginia, and elsewhere for possible use in response to Hurricane Ophelia.
4. No new commodities have been ordered for Katrina since September 5. Redirect orders for commodities in the pipeline continue to be received, but are decreasing in number and frequency. We will continue to stand by as further needs may be identified for Katrina or subsequent storm events, such as Hurricane Ophelia.
5. The current situation is that sufficient ice and water is available for Hurricane Katrina relief and any future storms during the 2005 hurricane season.